

### AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

#### LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) An information management system for tracking medical instruments, comprising:

at least one antimicrobial treatment device for reducing microbial contamination of a medical instrument by means of at least one treatment agent;

at least one instrument tracking client, each instrument tracking client installed on a respective general purpose computer, wherein one of said instrument tracking clients assigns (1) a device identifier for identifying an antimicrobial treatment device (2) a load identifier for identifying one or more medical instruments treated together using the antimicrobial treatment device identified by the device identifier, and [[ (3) ]] wherein one of said instrument tracking clients is programmed to transmit an operator identifier for identifying an operator of the antimicrobial device identified by the device identifier; and

a communication server interface in bi-directional communication with the at least one instrument tracking client and the at least one antimicrobial treatment device, said communication server interface programmed to:

receive data from an instrument tracking client, said received data including the device identifier, the load identifier, and the operator identifier, and

transmit data from the communication server interface to an antimicrobial treatment device, said transmitted data including the device identifier, the load identifier, and the operator identifier.

2. (original) An information management system according to claim 1, wherein said communication server interface includes a communication server installed on a general purpose computer system.

3. (original) An information management system according to claim 2, wherein said communication server is implemented as at least one of a Component Object Model (COM), a COM+, and a Distributed Component Object Model (DCOM).

4. (original) An information management system according to claim 1, wherein said system further comprises a computer network for connecting said respective general purpose computer system with said communication server interface.

5. (original) An information management system according to claim 1, wherein said antimicrobial treatment device is selected from the group consisting of: a sterilizer and a washer.

Claims 6-14 (canceled)